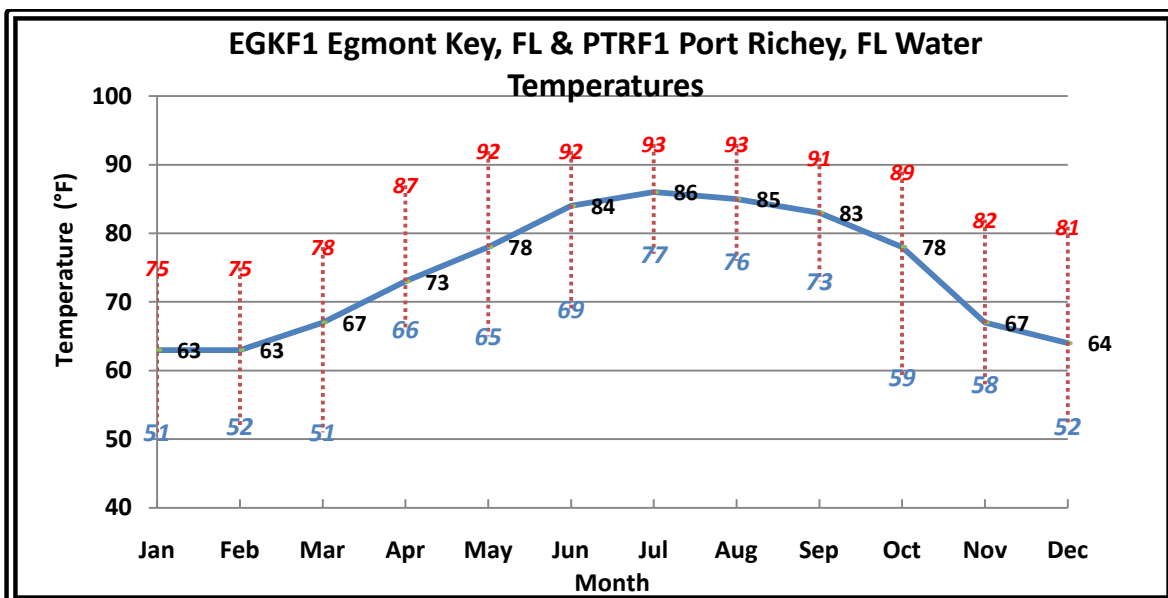
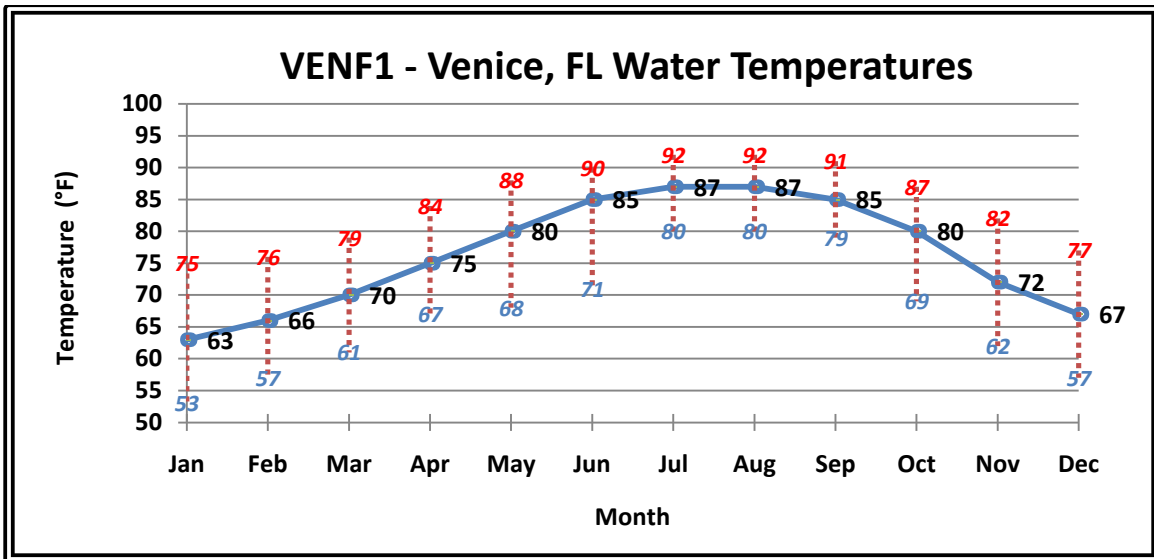


Water Temperature Trends for the Tampa Bay Area

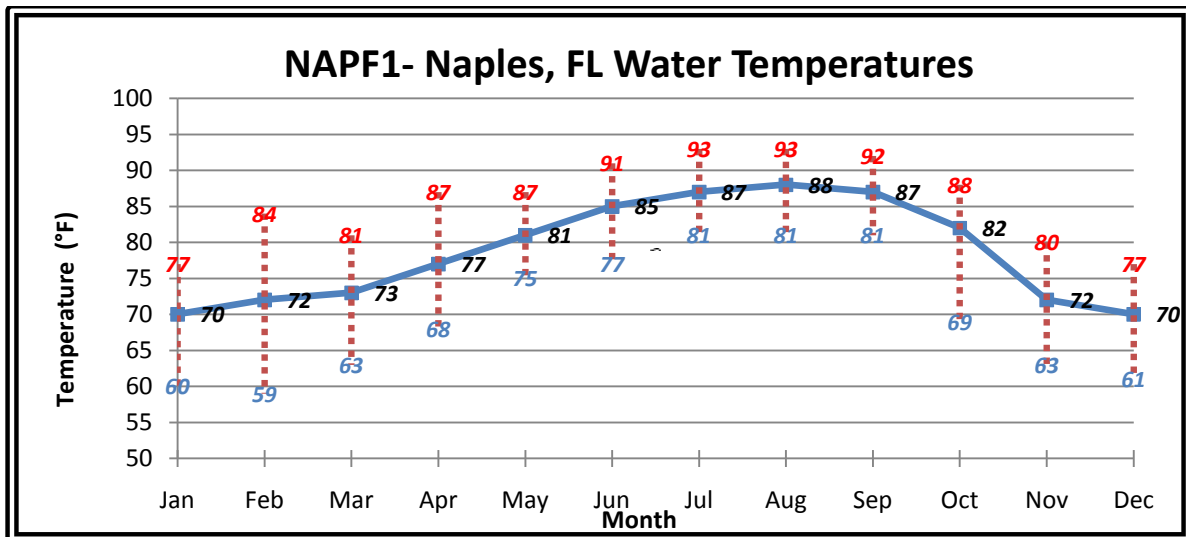
Climatologically speaking, September marks the month where water temperatures in West Central Florida begin to decline. Now, that's not to say that there won't be any more days this year where the Gulf of Mexico will feel like a warm bath. On average over the past five to ten years water temperatures tend to peak in August or September and slowly decline through January or February. While the air temperature may already feel slightly cooler (upper 80's right now compared to mid 90's in June and July), water responds differently due to a much higher heat capacity to compared land. Therefore, as air temperatures rise in the spring and decrease in the fall, sea surface temperatures will lag in response time. Below are a few graphs from coastal locations around the region showing the average water temperatures of the Gulf of Mexico throughout the year. At the bottom of the page is a map showing the average water temperatures for the month of September.



A.



B.



C.

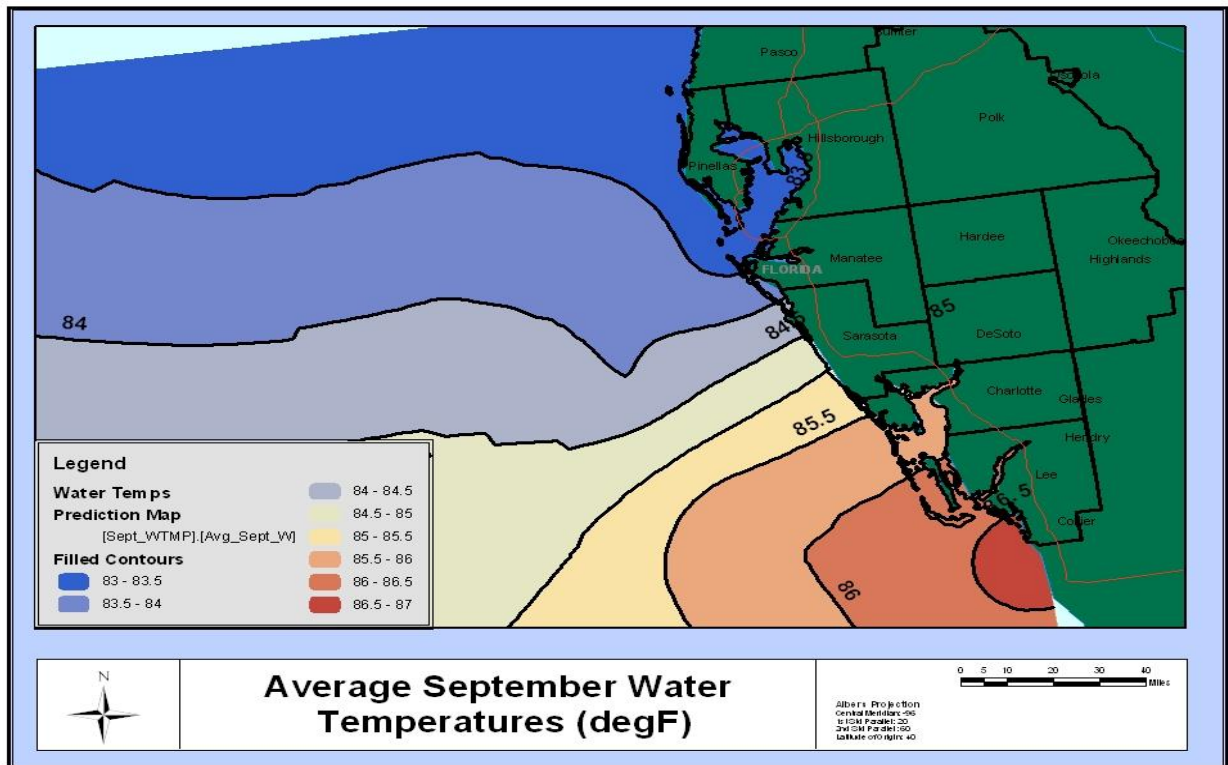
Graphs A shows the water temperature trend near Egmont Key from 2004-2008. Due to sporadic sensor failures in 2007 and 2008, temperatures from Port Richey were incorporated in the averages.

Graph B shows water temperatures from the Venice C-Man buoy from 1998-2008.

Graph C shows water temperatures from the Naples Buoy from 2004-2008.

All graphs show the maximum value observed each month (red number) and the minimum value (blue number).

The black number is the average temperature from the time periods.



This map shows the average water temperatures for the month of September. An interpolation from several near shore and off shore buoys was completed. Temperatures range from approximately 83 degrees north of Tampa Bay to approximately 86 degrees further south near Lee County.